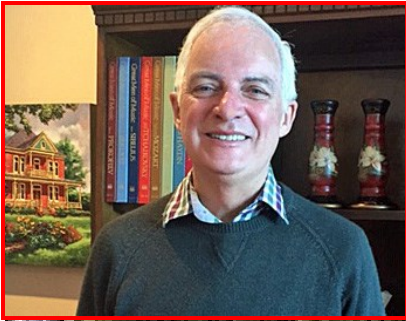


Impact of the American Loyalists on Canada



By Paul Desbiens

Loyalists move to Canada

- During the American Revolution, more than 19,000 Loyalists are serving Great Britain in the special militia created such as the King Royal Regiment of New York and the Butler's Rangers. Many Aboriginals also fight along with the British. Several of them are stationed inside fortifications in New York, Boston or refugee camps in Sorel and Machiche in Quebec
- After the British lost the American war of independence, they were no longer able to protect the Loyalists who worked for them. This resulted in a massive exodus towards Great Britain, Bermuda and Canada (Quebec and Ontario today) and the Maritimes
- The Loyalists coming to Canada established new settlements. The refugee took up land in areas not well settled yet and stayed with their friends. Many were former soldiers and tended to congregate with one another
- Modern Canada inherited many aspects of the Loyalists ideology, a certain conservatism, a preference for evolution instead of revolution in governance and the welcoming of a multicultural society

Loyalists move to Canada(2)

- Most Loyalists were neither rich or coming from a higher social class. Most were farmers, carpenters or tradesmen. They came from different cultural backgrounds and many were new immigrants
- White Loyalists brought with them several slaves. Before 1834, slavery is legal in all North America colonies except for Upper Canada
- Some 3,500 black Loyalists arrived in the Maritimes. Many were attracted by the promise of 100 acres for each head of family and 50 additional acres for each family member. Black Loyalists will mostly settle in Shelburne, Digby, Chedabuctou (Guysborough) and Halifax
- The arrival of an important contingent of black people did not sit well with the local population. Lands offered to the blacks were not of the best quality

After the British Conquest of Canada

- Great Britain led a long war against France until 1763. It is at the end of that war that Great Britain officially took possession of New France. American farmers saw this as a great opportunity to push their settlements westward, past the Appalachian mountains
- The British king however feels that this war was very costly. Their treasury is practically empty because it costed them some \$15 billion in today's currency. To cope with this situation, the king reinforced taxation. He felt that the colony had to support the burden of that war. Taxes were levied on tea, wine, sugar, molasses and newspapers
- For the American population, it resulted in the collapse of the economy, unemployment for the poor while the English generals and merchants succeeded to increase their wealth

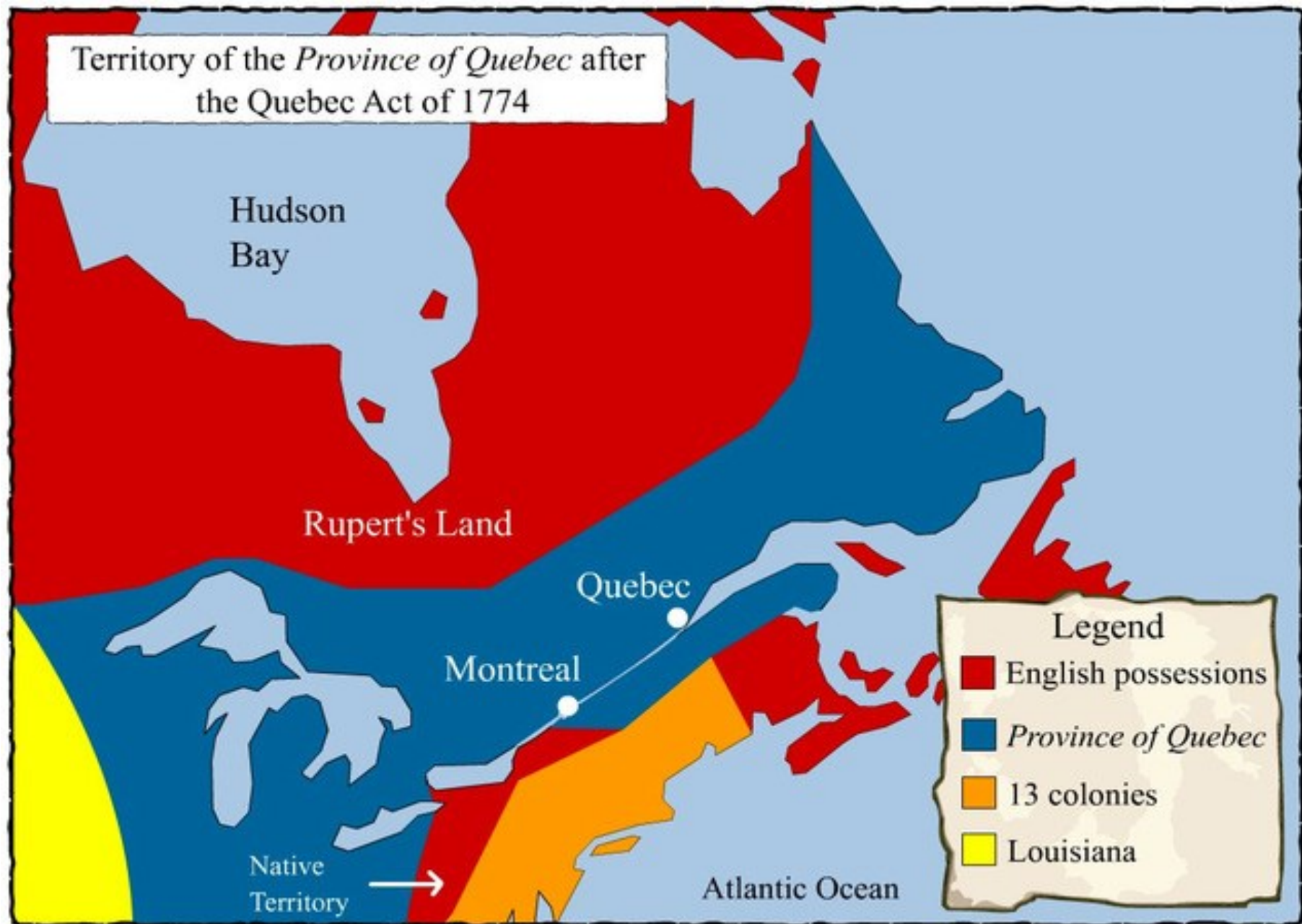
After the British Conquest of Canada (2)

- Farmers experienced their first frustration when England decided to lay its claim on all new acquired lands. Western expansion could not take place because the king stopped any farmer settlement in the conquered territories. After this disappointment, farmers refused to pay new taxes. They only accepted to pay taxes levied by their own community and their representatives. They refused to pay any taxes to a Parliament in which there were none of their representatives present. Farmers developed the slogan: « **No taxation without representation** »
- New taxes created between 1763 and 1767 only increased the farmers frustration. Sensing these increased tensions, the king sent additional troops to the colony, a move which contributed to further increase tensions. This is exemplified by the March 5, 1770 protest called the “**Boston massacre**” which resulted in 5 dead
- In 1773, Great Britain came to the rescue of the East India Company by levying taxes on tea. To show their discontent, farmers decided to act. During the night of December 16, 1773, a group of 50 patriots disguised as Indians, took possession of the ship of the East India Company and threw all tea crates overboard. This became known as the « **Boston tea party** »

After the British Conquest of Canada (3)

- Faced with this unexpected event, London decides to substantially increase its army in Massachusetts. On the other side, Massachusetts farmers form a militia movement and ask other colonies to join them to fight the British
- The king also decides to close the Port of Boston until the colony fully reimburse the tea shipment thrown overboard. In addition, the king refuses any additional autonomy to the other colonies. This convinced even the more moderate farmers from the other colonies to join the revolution
- To add insult to injury, on May 20, 1774, Great Britain signed the **Act of Quebec** which produced a different division of the conquered territory by yielding a larger share to the Province of Quebec

Territory of the *Province of Quebec* after
the Quebec Act of 1774



After the British Conquest of Canada (4)

- American farmers did not accept this decision because New York will lose control of commerce on the Great Lakes to the benefit of Montreal
- At sunrise on April 19, 1775, the first fire exchange between the American militia and the British Army takes place but the militia fails and retreats. The battles then moved on to Lexington, MA, and Concord, MA, where the American militia was better equipped and succeed to beat the British who are forced to retreat to Boston. This is considered as the beginning of the **war of independence**.
- The British controlled **Fort Ticonderoga** was attacked on May 10, 1775, by the Green Mountain Boys and other state militia under the command of Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold, who captured it in the surprise attack. This proved to be a great prize for the **Continental Army** which now could make good use of the numerous long range canons and ammunitions that they captured and later on, used for the siege of Boston

After the British Conquest of Canada (5)

- When the British were chased from Boston on March 17, 1776 following the end of the siege of Boston, they had regrouped in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Afterwards they attacked New York in August 1776, beating George Washington's Continental Army at Long Island. British forces occupied the region, including the lower part of the Hudson River until 1783
- **July 4, 1776** is a key date. The American Congress adopted the Act for the Declaration of Independence of United-States

The **war of independence** of United States will continue over **eight years** in the 13 American colonies with George Washington as Commander of the Continental Army

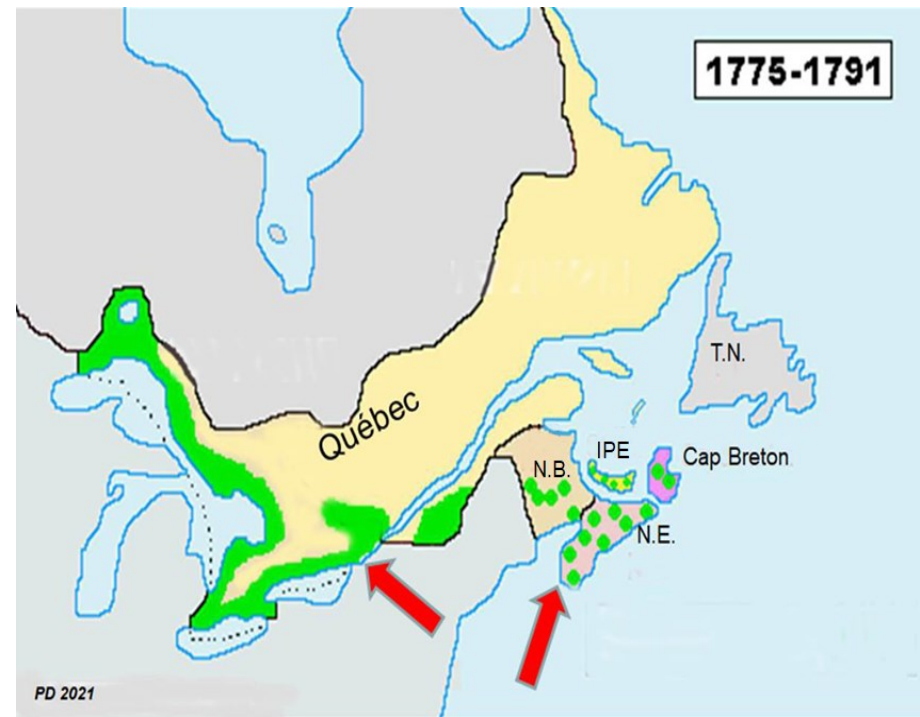


Forced departure of the American Loyalists

- The Treaty of Paris signed in 1783 recognised the independence of the 13 colonies and the control of the territory East of the Mississippi River.
- The British Government moved a number of Loyalists to Great Britain but also transport some of them to Bermuda and Canada.
- On the American soil, the Loyalists were considered war collaborators and they were forced to abandon their lands. They were chased by their former neighbours who took part in the revolution

The Loyalists which accounted for 5 to 10% of the US population preferred to move to places like Canada to continue to be protected by Great Britain.

With the American independence, it is estimated that **100,000 Loyalists** moved out of the US and half of them landed in Canada.



Massive influx of Loyalists in Canada

- Canada at the time had a total population of 166,000 persons, so, the arrival of close to 50,000 new settlers, changed the Canadian demographic situation for ever
- At that time, Quebec and Ontario accounted for 113,000 persons while 53,000 lived in the Maritimes
- The majority of Loyalists (**36,000**) settled in Nova Scotia which before 1784, included New Brunswick and Cape Breton. This represented 75% of the refugee total
- The Loyalists were attracted by the economic potential of the Nova Scotia colony, the English language and laws

The arrival of 36,000 Loyalists in the Maritimes resulted in a population increase of two thirds. It appears that this resulted in some integration difficulties. Acadians already settled along the Saint John River were forced North to less fertile lands

This massive arrival of Loyalists resulted in the separation of Nova Scotia (June 18, 1784) into three colonies (NS, NB and Cape Breton). The latter will be reunified with NS in 1820

500 Loyalists settled in Prince Edward Island which was a separate colony from Nova Scotia

Quebec will receive 2,000 Loyalists while 10,000 headed for Upper Canada later to become Ontario



Arrival of the Loyalists in Canada 1783: Library and Archives Canada

Acadians vs Loyalists

- After their deportation in 1755, Acadians obtained the permission to come back from exile in 1764, under the condition that they agree to an oath of allegiance to the British crown and that they form small settlements in different locations. Acadians who were hiding came back. From 1766, Acadians settled along the Saint John river, mainly in the old village of Sainte-Anne-des-Pays-Bas, now known as Fredericton
- With the arrival of the Loyalists, Acadians who had settled along the Saint John river were forced to move to Madawaka, essentially woodlands not very fertile. Acadian populations are officially recognised in 1787 and they received title to their properties shortly afterwards
- The majority of Loyalists settled in Saint John, Kingston, Gagetown and Fredericton. About 1,000 of them also settled in St. Andrews as well as the Chignecto peninsula

Acadians vs Loyalists(2)

- Seigneuries in the Maritimes: Under the New France regime, there were some 30 seigneuries in Acadia. With the British conquest, the property system was changed, hence eliminating the seigneurial system
- The main Loyalists waves to Canada happened in the years 1783 to 1784
- With the arrival of the Loyalists in 1783, British authorities had the exclusive right to register and confirm property ownership. This is in contrast to what happened in Quebec whose wrights were preserved through the **Act of Quebec in 1774**. In that province, the seigneurial regime was allowed to prevail until its abolition in 1854.
- During this period, the Nova Scotia population kept an ambiguous attitude regarding the Loyalists, preserving trade links as much as possible. Nova Scotians were called « **Neutral Yankees** » as a result. However in 1784, an important number of black loyalists arrived and the colony witnessed its first racial incidents. Relations between whites and blacks remained tense from that time on

Loyalists in the Maritimes

- Before the Canadian Confederation, many Maritimers believed they had unlimited economic potential and all British colonies were governed and managed responsibly. Maritimers believed they would play an important role in the evolution of the North American colonies
- This idyllic vision will come to a sharp end after Confederation. The Maritimes are forgotten by the new Canada which witnessed a strong western push. The Maritimes are also neglected by the new immigrants, mostly attracted by the central provinces
- The anti-Confederation resentment was particularly strong in Nova Scotia and in PEI. This malaise was present from 1867 to 1930 and at times resulted in protests. After decades of slow economic growth, improvements in the construction and tourism sectors were welcomed. In addition, traditional trade with the US and Great Britain in the resources sector helped make the region more prosperous

Loyalists in Quebec

- As early as 1783, Quebec saw the arrival of many American Loyalists. A first contingent of 300 persons settled at the Baie-Missisquoi (Philipsburg). The Loyalists did not want to become part of the French Canadian seigneurial system, preserved through the 1774 Act of Quebec
- To accommodate the Loyalists, the colonial government opened new concessions in the Western part of the Ottawa River which were not subject to the French seigneurial system
- Governor Frederik Haldimand fearing resentment of the existing French Canadian population, redirected several Loyalists immigrants towards the Great Lakes in today's Ontario. A few Loyalists settled in Gaspésia, particularly in Paspébiac
- After the first wave of Loyalists, other Americans left the United-States to settle on lands offered to them by the British

Source: http://www.axl.cefan.ulaval.ca/francophonie/HISTfrQC_s2_Britannique.htm#6
La_R%C3%A9volution_am%C3%A9ricaine_(1775-1783)_et_ses_cons%C3%A9quences_au_Canada_

Loyalists in Quebec (2)

- Anglophones put more and more pressure on the British Government to give them an edge in the administration of the colony. Hence in 1791, Quebec's territory is split in half and we now have the **Upper Canada territory (Ontario) and the Lower Canada territory (Quebec)**
- In Lower Canada, Americans settled in large numbers in the townships not yet colonised, near the current Canadian-American border. The influx of Americans will be maintained over the years with the exception of the 1812-1815 period when the US Government launched a conquest war against its Northern neighbour. This was a natural move by New England (Vermont, New Hampshire) and New York State farmers to obtain new lands
- A lesser known consequence of the US War of Independence was the migration of several Indian tribes towards Canada (Ontario and Quebec today). Being chased by American farmers, Indian tribes were forced to move out of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire and New York. They settled in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario. Those were the Micmacs, Abénakis, Malécites and Algonquins who had lost their strategic value in the eyes of Americans
- The first years after the implementation of the law of 1791 correspond with a period of relative prosperity. Lower Canada exported easily its agricultural surpluses to Great Britain as well as fur and forestry products. However it is not French Canadians who benefited the most from this trade. English merchants controlled 90% of the Lower Canada economy.

Loyalists in Quebec (3)

- The rapid arrival of American Loyalists in the Province of Quebec, forced British authorities to develop a compromise. The Anglos were governed by English laws while French Canadians preserved their laws. Loyalists did not want the catholic faith nor the seigneurial system
- The Loyalists resentment of the American republicans was transferred on the French Canadian population, an easy pray because they had already been conquered
- The Loyalists demanded that the Canadian colony become entirely British and what was left of New France was not to be tolerated
- **Montreal** was the most important economic center for the conquered country and the Loyalist mentality quickly took hold of the situation. This led the Loyalists to play a key role in the defeat of the Upper and Lower Canada rebellions during the years 1837-38. In addition, the **burning of the Parliament Building in Montreal** was an important event in pre-Confederation Canadian history and occurred on the night of **April 25, 1849**.

Canada's Parliament in Montreal set on fire

- **On January 29, 1849**, MP Louis Hyppolyte Lafontaine moved to form a committee of the whole House on February 9 to "take into consideration the necessity of establishing the amount of losses incurred by certain inhabitants in Lower Canada during the political troubles of 1837 and 1838, and of providing for the payment thereof".
- The opposition party, which denounced the desire of the government to "pay the rebels", showed itself reluctant to begin the study of the question and on February 17, the leading Tory MPPs held a public meeting to protest against the measure
- However, on March 9, the Legislative Assembly passed the bill by a vote of 47 to 18 in approval of compensations to those having suffered losses during the rebellions
- **On April 25**, Governor General (GG), **James Bruce Elgin**, gave the royal assent to the bill in the Legislative Council room, in the presence of members of both houses of Parliament. The GG decided to also give assent to some forty one bills passed by the houses including the compensation bill due to rebellion losses. When the GG exited the building, he found a crowd of protesters blocking his path. Some of the protesters began throwing eggs and rocks at him and his aides
- Between 1,200 and 1,500 were reported to have attended the meeting on Champ-de-Mars to hear speeches of orators protesting vigorously against Lord Elgin's assent to the bill
- The crowd then followed him to the Parliament Buildings. When they arrived on site, the rioters broke the windows of the House of Assembly, which was still in session and set fire to the Parliament building

April 25, 1949
Burning of Canada's Parliament
in Montreal



The Constitutional Law of 1791

- The constitutional law of 1791 adopted by the British Parliament resulted in the splitting of the province of Quebec in two distinct colonies: the Lower Canada and the Upper Canada, which in fact abrogated Article XII of the 1774 Act of Quebec
- At that time, Lower Canada had 140,000 Francophones and 10,000 Anglophones. Upper Canada had only 10,000 Anglophones, mostly Loyalists. There was also a certain number of Francophones and Aboriginals
- Only the Loyalists of Upper Canada were satisfied with this law because they were no longer subjected to French laws and they had their own Parliament. However an important minority in that province were not satisfied with the established cliques connected to the colonial power which led to the 1837 Upper Canada rebellion
- As for the Lower Canada English minority, even though they had a majority in the two governing councils (executive and legislative), they were a minority in the legislative Assembly where they had only 15 of the 50 seats

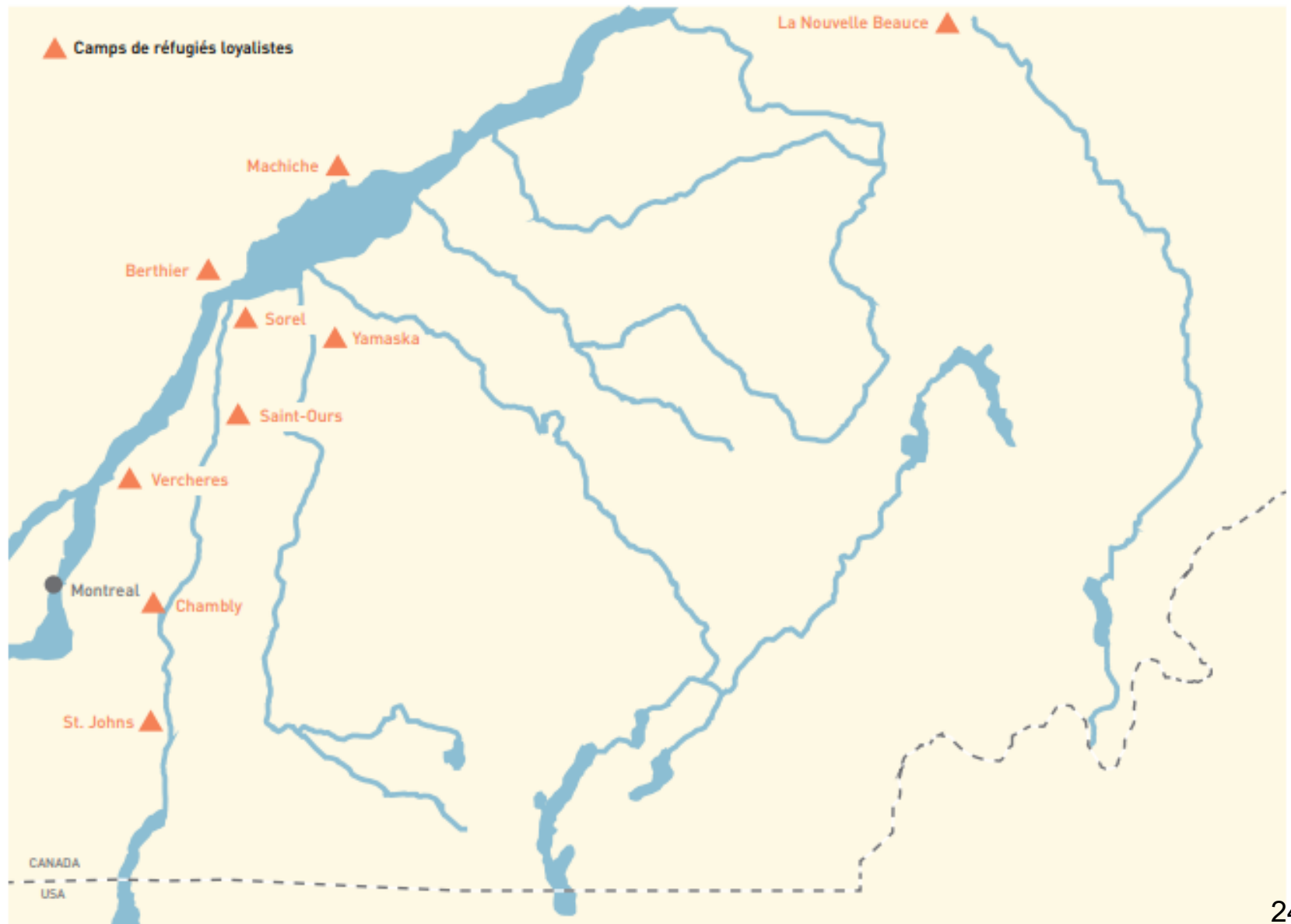
Lord Durham

- The end game envisaged by Lord Durham was the re-unification of the Lower and Upper Canada parliaments in 1841 which was strongly opposed by French Canadians. At that time, English-speaking Upper Canada had a considerably smaller population: some 480,000 compared to 670,000 in Lower Canada, of whom about 510,000 were French Canadians
- Had the French Canadian population been not so extensive, we believe Durham would have proposed their deportation to several countries as to what happened to Acadians in 1755. This was simply not possible so his plan B was the proposed unification of the two Canadas with the objective to assimilate the French Canadian population
- The unfair settlement of 1841 was to be replaced with the **1867 Confederation Act (British North American Act)** which is still the basis of Canada foundation. Through this Act, Quebec and Ontario became separate entities as was the case prior to 1841

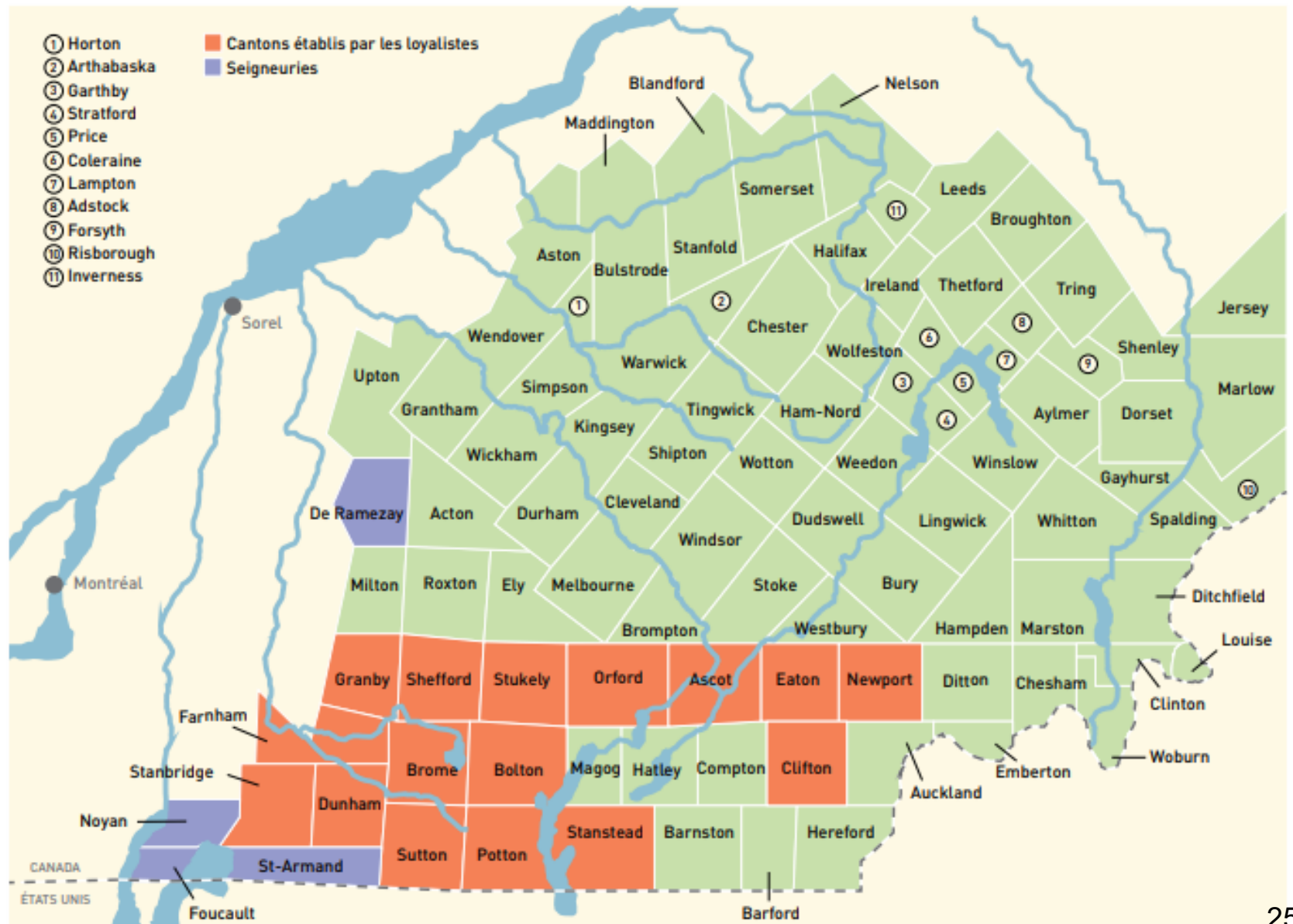
Loyalists impact on Quebec life

- Between 1774 and 1783, 500 to 600 Loyalists took refuge near Lake Champlain from Bay Missisquoi eastward. Many families settled in old French seigneuries of Foucault, Saint-Armand and Noyan. They established the foundations of the Township system between 1790 and 1820. They founded villages such as Clarenceville, Philipsburg, Pigeon Hill, Frelighsburg, Farnham, Dunham, etc. It will only be in 1858, four years after the abolition of the seigneurial regime, to see the use of the designation « **Eastern Townships** ». That designation changed again for « **Estrie** » in 1940
- After the 1812-14 war against the Americans, the Lower Canada Government decided to offer parcels of land to the retired soldiers. They first settled in Drummondville and then on to Orford and Ascot
- British immigrants started to arrive after 1815. A few chose to settle in the Eastern Townships but the majority went to Upper Canada. Scottish and Irish immigrants settled in the Townships of Iverness, Leeds of Ireland, Richmond and Sherbrooke. A few more headed for Gaspésia, attracted by the fishing trade. However, British immigration was much reduced after 1837
- Between 1812 and 1850, the Eastern Townships witnessed an important American immigration wave. At that time, Americans accounted for two thirds of the population in the region and the balance were of British origin. Along the border, the ratio of Americans was as high as 90%. There were very few French Canadians in those regions at that time. However, they gradually moved into those areas and became a majority at the end of the XIX century

Loyalists refugee camps in Quebec



Loyalists establishments in the Eastern Townships



The two colonies

- Considering that the new Upper Canada province was their own, Loyalists did not bother with linguistic issues. **John Graves Simcoe** (1752-1806) became the first lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada (1791 à 1796), and he made sure to erase any Francophone and Aboriginal traces in the province. Despite these efforts, Northern Ontario's francophone population succeeded in maintaining and expanding its presence in the Northern part of that province
- As for the Francophone majority of Lower Canada, it did not take long before it had grievances against the English minority regarding the control of political institutions
- The small English bourgeoisie could not accept to be evicted from decisions that affected their economic interests. In addition, a few English leaders still had assimilation dreams, a situation which had become impossible with the division of the colony into two provinces
- Under those conditions, it was normal that during the 1791-1840 period, there were permanent conflicts between Anglophones and Francophones. The debates degenerated into what is called the 1837-38 rebellion

Loyalists in Ontario

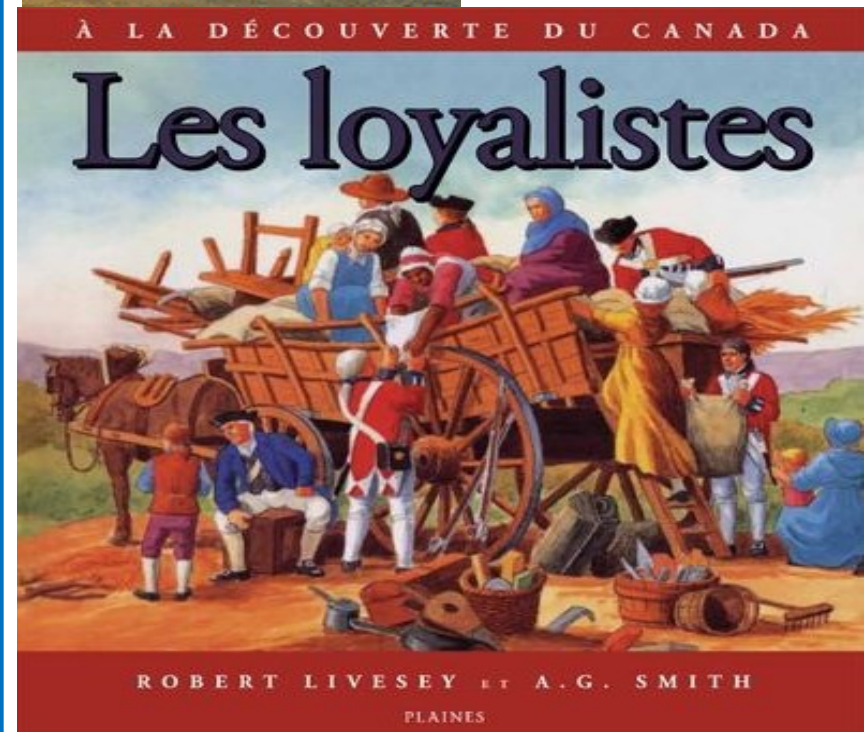
- After the British defeat during the US war of independence, 2,200 soldiers of German origin moved to Canada
- The largest contingent was composed of Mennonites. Many families were from Germany or Switzerland. These Loyalists headed for the South-West of Ontario, along the **Grand River**, especially Berlin, later renamed Kitchener. They also settled in the Northern portion of the river which is now Waterloo
- This formed the basis for attracting 50,000 additional immigrants from Germany between 1830-1860. The melting of the two sets of German immigrants appears to have been made harmoniously
- This region of Canada is historically, one of the most prosperous from industrial and technological perspectives and the German presence has been a big contributor to that situation

The Conestoga chariot was named after a valley of the same name in Pennsylvania. It was invented by the Germans to do long journeys and transport goods. This chariot was conceived to roll over rough roads and cross streams. If a sufficient number of horses were hitched up to the wagons, it could pull charges of up to 8 tons. It was the ideal vehicle to cover the Pennsylvania-Waterloo distance over a period of 5 weeks

Inside the chariot, one could find all necessary tools to start a new farm such as wheat and flax seed bags for a first plantation; rakes and plows to cultivate fields; food for the trip and the period before the first harvest; carpentry tools to build houses and barns. Livestock also accompanied the expeditions. Space being limited, only essential and religious items were carried in trunks but tools were attached outside the chariots



Waterloo, ON





WATERLOO PIONEERS PIONNIERS DE WATERLOO

In the year 1800 a small number of Mennonite families arrived from Pennsylvania to settle Block 2, former Six Nations land along the Grand River. Others, mainly Mennonites, followed during the next three years until problems regarding ownership of the land curtailed the migration. Representatives were sent back to Pennsylvania to raise the money necessary to secure clear title to the land, with the result that a joint stock company was formed and 60,000 acres purchased. Pennsylvania 'Dutch' settlers quickly took up this land, creating the first sizeable inland settlement in Upper Canada.

En 1800, une poignée de familles mennonites de la Pennsylvanie vint s'établir sur le lot n° 2, ancien territoire des Six Nations, qui longeait la Grande Rivière. D'autres colons, pour la plupart mennonites, vinrent les retrouver au cours des trois années suivantes jusqu'à l'apparition de problèmes relatifs aux droits de propriété. Certains retournèrent lever des fonds en Pennsylvanie; l'argent permit aux colons de fonder une société par actions et d'acheter 60 000 acres de terrain. Des colons de langue allemande, venants de Pennsylvanie, s'en portèrent bientôt acquéreurs et créèrent la première importante colonie intérieure du Haut-Canada.

Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.
Commission des lieux et monuments historiques du Canada.

Government of Canada - Gouvernement du Canada

Rejection of the French revolutionary model

- **The French Revolution** had not left French Canadians indifferent. However, both Francophone and Anglophone Canadians were horrified by the carnage which took place, including the beheading of the king and the queen. In addition, the anti-catholic posture of the French revolutionaries did not sit well with French Canadians. The Canadian clergy clearly expressed its preference for the English system in this regard. Afterwards, three American attempts to conquer Canada failed. This happened in good part because of the neutrality or collaboration of French Canadians
- **The Loyalists** played an important role in the War of 1812-14 and the defeat of the Fenians (1866-71). Unfortunately for French Canadians, they also helped kill a number of Quebec Patriots and destroyed several farms in Quebec during the 1837-38 rebellion. In the battle of St. Eustache on December 14, 1837, 280 Loyalists helped British forces win this battle. In the days that followed, soldiers and Loyalists scoured the county of Deux-Montagnes. Saint-Eustache and Saint-Benoît were burned. In Saint-Joachim, Sainte-Scholastique and Sainte-Thérèse, they also burned the houses of the rebellion's leaders
- In 1837, Upper Canada British forces were sent to Lower Canada to crush the Patriots revolutionary movement. However Upper Canada was having its own revolution under MP William Lyon Mackenzie. Loyalists seized this moment to intervene in York (Toronto) and crush the Upper Canada revolution

General conclusion on the Loyalists

- The US war of independence resulted in the move of some 48,000 Loyalists to Canada during the 1775-1784 period. The most heavily impacted region was that of the Maritime provinces where 36,600 Loyalists settled
- As for Quebec, the Loyalists left their mark in the Eastern Townships, close to the Canada-US border
- For Ontario, Loyalists played a prominent role in what has become the most populous province in the country
- The 1812-14 war against American aggressors took place mostly in Ontario. Americans grossly underestimated the will and strength of Loyalists in that province and they lost
- On the occasion of the two Canadian rebellions in the 1837-38 period, Loyalists played a considerable role both in Upper and Lower Canada by supporting the British troops
- Even though today's Canada still maintains important Loyalists roots, the massive immigration of the last century has completely changed the character of a country which has now become multicultural